



Maricopa County Animal Care & Control

READING YOUR CAT'S BODY LANGUAGE

THE TALE OF THE TAIL...

- ♥ When the tail is flying high:
"all is terrific."
- ♥ When it is at half-mast:
"all is not terrific."
- ♥ When it is dropped low:
"I'm very unhappy."
- ♥ When it twitches back and forth:
"back off."
- ♥ When the tip twitches:
"I'm self conscious."
- ♥ When it's bushy:
"I'm angry!"

THE EAR STORY...

- ♥ Ears alert/straight up:
"Ready for fun or affection."
- ♥ Ears flat out sideways:
"What's up?"
- ♥ Ears downward:
"I'm defensive. Watch out!"
- ♥ Ears down and back:
"I'm furious. Watch out!"

LISTEN TO MY PAWS...

- ♥ Paw kneading:
"I'm content."
- ♥ Paw strokes, Paw hugs:
"I love you."
- ♥ Paw nagging:
"Hurry up!"
- ♥ Paw blows:
"A fight!"

THE EYES SAY IT...

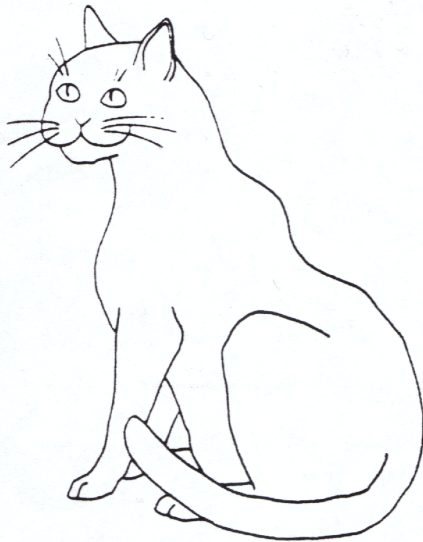
- ♥ Eyes wide open and looking at you:
"I'm listening."
- ♥ Eyes half closed:
"I'm sleepy."
- ♥ Eye pupils in slits:
"I'm feeling alert and confident."
- ♥ Bug-eyed:
"I'm frightened."...so be careful!
- ♥ Blinking and winking:
"I'm talking to you, I like you."
- ♥ Eyes clouded:
"I'm ill. "Or, "I'm relaxed."
- ♥ Eyes staring:
"Stay away." A stare is a challenge.

FELINE BODY LANGUAGE

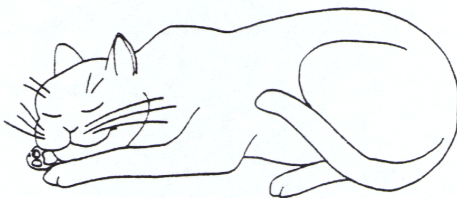
A cat's tail and ears can tell you a lot about how he feels. The following diagrams will help you to interpret a cat's mood.

CONTENT

His relaxed face and erect ears
let you know that he is
comfortable and trusting.



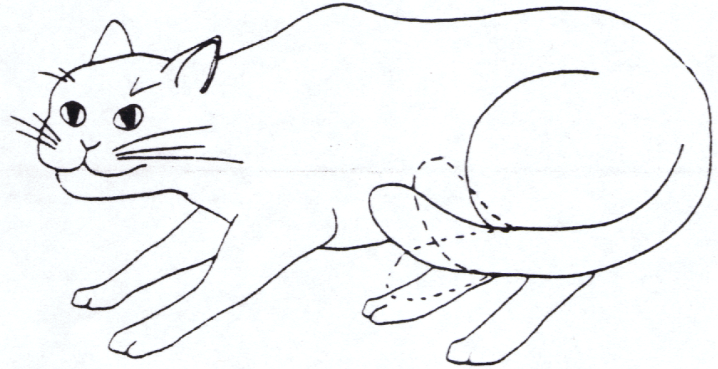
"I'm happy."



"ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ"

CAT NAP

Did you know that a cat must trust you completely before he will sleep in front of you?



"This looks like fun!"

PLAYFUL

His dilated, or wide-open eyes, and swishing tail tell you that he is ready to pounce.



"Don't touch me!"

AGGRESSION

His ears are pointed back. His eyes are fully dilated. He is ready to defend himself.